

MacGowan R, Sosman J, Eldridge G, Moss S, Margolis A, Flanigan T, Gaydos C, and the Project START Study Group. Sexually transmitted infections in men with a history of incarceration. XV International Conference on AIDS; July 11–16, 2004; Bangkok, Thailand, Abstract ThPeC7475.

Background: The prevalence of HIV, sexually transmitted infections (STI), and hepatitis are higher among men entering prisons than in the general US population. Many prisons offer screening, treatment, vaccination, and prevention programs to prevent new infections; however, little is known about rates of hepatitis and STI among young men after release to the community.

Methods: Young men (18 to 29 years of age) from prisons in 3 US states were enrolled into an HIV/STI/hepatitis prevention intervention study (Project START). Participants who completed main trial activities, and who were not currently incarcerated at 24-weeks post-release were enrolled in a supplemental study assessing the prevalence of STI and hepatitis. Blood and urine samples were screened for gonorrhea (GC), chlamydia (CT), trichomoniasis, syphilis, and hepatitis B&C. Logistic regression analyses were conducted to determine predictors of infection ($p < 0.05$).

Results: 178 of 248 eligible participants (72%) provided samples (99% urine and 93% blood). Mean age was 22.5 yrs (SD=2.7) and 92% reported multiple incarcerations. At 24-weeks post-release, 69% reported unprotected vaginal or anal sex, and 26% tested positive for one or more infections (GC-1%, CT-12%, Trich-8%, Syphilis 0%; HCV-6%; active HBV infection-1%). 56% were susceptible to hepatitis B infection. Active STI were associated with less than high school education (HSE) (OR=2.52, 95% CI 1.18-5.41). HCV was associated with IDU (OR=65.2, 95% CI 9.59-443.17).

Conclusions: Findings suggest acceptability of screening for infections, and high rates of STI and associated risk behaviors among young men in the community after release from prison. More effective HIV/STI/hepatitis prevention programs that focus on behaviors after release from prison are needed for incarcerated men to prevent STI transmission. Programs should target IDUs and men with less than HSE, who may be at elevated risk for hepatitis and STI.